Concessional facility to the Press Reporters

†1947. SHRI P.K. MAHESHWARI: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have provided the facility of rail-journey to the Press Reporters on concessional rates;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the reasons for not extending such concessional facility to the Press Reporters in Shatabdi and Rajdhani Express; and

(d) whether in view of the heavy increase in reservation and other charges other than the basic rail fare, is it proposed to extend the concession for other enhanced charges also to the Press Reporters?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD): (a) to (c) Press Correspondents accredited to the Headquarters of the Government of India, State Governments, Union Territories and Districts, and residing within 25 kms. of the concerned Capital/Headquarter, are eligible for Coupon Books at 50% concession for travel in all classes upto 30,000 Kms. per annum on bonafide press work. Coupons are accepted for payment of basic Mail/Express fares for normal Mail/Express trains only and not for Rajdhani/Shatabdi group of trains.

Minister of Railways, in his Budget Speech for 2003-2004, has proposed to withdraw the distance limit of 25 Kms. and 30,000 Kms. mentioned above and grant 30% concession in Rajdhani/Shatabdi trains.

(d) No, Sir.

Construction of Radio Stations

†1948. SHRI HARISH RAWAT : Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether there are some Radio Station's buildings of which have been constructed but the broadcasting has not been started far;

(b) if so, the places where these Radio Stations exist alongwith the date of construction of their buildings;

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(c) whether Government have fixed dates for starting the broadcasting from these stations; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD): (a) to (d) List of AIR Stations which are ready but awaiting sanction of staff to commence broadcasting is given below alongwith their date of technical readiness:

(i) Dharmapuri (Tamil Nadu)—FM (March, 2001)
(ii) Himmatnagar (Guj)—MW (March, 2001)
(iii) Machrela (Andhra Pradesh)—FM (March, 2001)
(iv) Mandla (M.P.)—FM (March, 2002)
(v) Manjeri (Kerala)—FM (March, 2002)
(vi) Rajgarh (M.P.)—FM (March, 2002)
(vii) Saraipalli (Chhattisgarh)—FM (March, 2002)
(viii) Soro (Orissa)—MW (March, 2002)
(ix) Kupwara (J and K)—MW (March, 2002)
(x) Nyomarap (J and K)—MW (March, 2002)
(xi) Tiesuru (J and K)—MW (March, 2002)
(xii) Drass (J and K)—MW (March, 2002)
(xiii) Diskit (J and K)—MW (September, 2002)
(xiv) Padum (J and K)—MW (September, 2002)

These stations will be made function as soon as the staff is available, for which efforts are being made.

In addition, FM Transmitter at Churachandpur has been technically ready since March, 2000. Decision regarding link language of the station is awaited from the State Government in order to commence broadcasting.

Content regulation for media

1949. SHRI NANA DESHMUKH: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether there appears to be a need for strong and transparent content regulation for working of the consumer friendly media;